HAND-BOOK FOR LONDON.

Mr. Murray's hand-books for travellers are known over Europe. Wherever you meet English tourists—and where can you go without meeting them?—you may be certain of seeing the red-covered guide book. Uniform with these he has just announced a hand-book for London, past and present, wherein it is proposed among much new matter, to give the origin of the names of places, and to distinguish, as far as possible, the residences of remarkable men. The author of the book is Mr. Peter Cunningham, and we anticipate, from his zeal and ability, a peculiarly interesting volume. In a morning's walk we pass many houses without emotion which, if we but knew the names of former occupants, would afford matter for much pleasant thought. Look at one paragraph, for proof, in Mr. Cunningham's prospectus:—

"Particular residences of remarkable men; or streets connected with their names: Chaucer, and his account of what he observed in Friday-street; the house in Aldersgate-street in which the first Lord Shaftesbury lived, in the time of Charles II.; Milton's house in Petty France, Westminster; Andrew Marvell's rooms in Maiden-lane, Covent-garden; and Voltaire's London lodging at the *Blue Periwig*, in the same lane; Dryden's house in Gerard-street; Southerne's house in Tothill-street; Sir Isaac Newton's house and Observatory in St. Martin's-street; Hogarth's house on the east side, and Sir Joshua Reynolds' house on the west side of Leicester-square; Dr. Johnson's house in Gough-square, and the site of his house in Bolt-court, Fleet-street; Lord Byron's residence in Piccadilly; the house in which Gibbon wrote his 'Decline and Fall;' the house in which Boswell, the biographer of Johnson died; the house in which Horace Walpole died; the house in which Thomas Gainsborough lived; the house in which Wilkie painted his 'Blind Fiddler;' the studios of Flaxman and Chantrey, and the residence of Sir Thomas Lawrence."

WIRE ROPES.

Mr. Carpmael read a paper at the Royal Institution on the 9th inst., on the manufacture of wire-ropes. He stated, that the process had grown up within the last four or five years. Till the year 1839-40 there were no real wire-ropes in this country, *i.e.* no manipulation of wire, first producing strands, and then combining these strands into a single rope.

He briefly noticed the improvements which had been made in the manufacture of hempen cordage during the last fifty years, and laid great stress on Captain Huddart's contrivance for varying the length of the yarns, according to their distance from the centre of the rope, so that each, throughout its course, being kept at the same distance from the central strand, was subjected more nearly to the same amount of tension. The characteristic difference between the mechanical principles of the manufacture of the hempen and the wire-rope was then inculcated. *Twisting is essential to the structure of the former, but would be destructive of the latter fabric.* This principle, long overlooked, was discovered by Mr. Newall, the patentee of the improved wire-rope, and the object of his machinery is to carry that principle into effect. The wire-rope consists of a hempen core, the horizontal section of which exhibits seven equal circles,—six round a central one; these, according to a known geometrical law, touch the central circle, and also each other. Round this central core are six strands, formed exactly in the same way, except that while the central core is of hemp (as is the core of the rope), it is surrounded by six wires,—the diameters of these wires being equal to those of the yarns of the core; so that a section of the rope exhibits forty-nine equal circles (thirty-six wire and thirteen hemp), arranged in a sort of hexagonal form, the lines joining the centres of the hempen cores of each strand producing a regular hexagon. Having exhibited the machines by which Mr. Newall *lays* the wires in the strands, avoiding all *twist*, Mr. Carpmael stated some of the purposes to which this manufacture had been applied. He premised, that the greatest strength is obtained when wire made of *hard* iron is used. Ropes thus manufactured are stronger, lighter, and cheaper than hempen cordage bearing equal weights; consequently, when materials are raised from a depth in mines, a heavier load may be lifted with equal power whenever the wire-rope is used. For the same reason, this fabric is preferable in the fixed rigging of ships; and its value for railway purposes has been proved by decisive tests. As long as hempen ropes were used on the Blackwall Railway, there were often two or three breakages a-day. Since these have been superseded by the iron-wire, there have not occurred more than twelve fractures in twelve months, and during six thousand journeys.

Correspondence.

CHURCHES AND CHURCHYARDS.

Sir,—In your account of Norfolk churches no minute is given of—1, Length; 2, Breadth; 3, Height to roof-ridge; 4, Ditto of tower; 5, Materials with which fabric is built; 6, Churchyard, as to size, trees, keeping.

In foreign churches we often find the height from the floor to the roof-ridge 60 feet to 100 feet,—in England seldom or never so much. Our modern churches are most of them "playthings" in comparison with those of our forefathers.

As to *materials*, we should find, I think, that they were chiefly taken, very wisely, from such matter as was found in the locality.

As to *churchyards*, a report would shew, I fear, that our English cemeteries are a disgrace to us. Horses, sheep, geese, footpaths, weeds, and filth are the usual features of an English churchyard.

Our clergy would readily, as a body, resign the right of making a churchyard a piece of grazing ground, wherein the kicks and knocks of animals deface or break to pieces tombstones, and others violate the sod of the poor man's last tenement.

Whilst trees add much to the beauty of a churchyard, an avenue of limes, *kept clear of boughs inside*, forms a fine arcade to the west door of a religious building. Besides, if a parish was once invited by its pastor to make the graveyard *an object of attention*, there is no doubt but a wilderness would soon be turned into a garden; and then, by arraying sepulture symmetrically, the spot would become an ornament, instead of eyesore, to every village in the kingdom.

I am, Sir, &c.,

W. Mason.

Swaffham, Norfolk, May, 1845.

MODERN BRICKLAYING.

Sir,—As you invite remarks on the subject of bricklaying, I consider it my duty, being a journeyman bricklayer, and having the welfare of my trade at heart, to accept the offer. I wish to remind you that the generality of our modern builders know nothing of bricklaying, and care less; and I wish to call your attention to the total disregard many surveyors pay to the art of brickwork, who consider that to make a drawing that looks pretty to the eye and can be worked out in cement no better than mud (as "J. Phillips" justly observes) is all that is required of them. The common system of builders is to let those have the work who undertake to do it for the lowest price, without any regard to quality; and I have worked on jobs of this kind where the bricks have been thrown in the wall quite dry without any mortar. If you wish it I can give you the name of the place and the parties also. My humble opinion is, that the art of brickwork has been declining since we have had so many *Builders*: men who care nothing and know nothing about trade, and whose only object is to realize all the profits they can; for I think we had better work done when we had master-bricklayers and master-carpenters, and each man kept to his own trade; I do not consider there is one builder who knows the right bond of brickwork, if I except Mr. ——, and it was in his employ that I saw so much bad work done. I wish to point out to you the manner in which some surveyors appoint their clerk of the works. They mostly seek for some carpenter to superintend a building,—a man that don't know Flemish bond from old English, and who never thinks of gauging work to see what it rises; so, instead of having four courses to 11¼ inches, he mostly gets three courses and a half to the foot; and here is the evil, for instead of having so much brick you have the quantity in mortar, and that not of the best sort.

It is a great pity that surveyors do not appoint a man that is competent to see to the brickwork, and have it properly bonded together and executed according to the specifications, and not allow so much bad work to be done; I can mention a firm in London, who made an excavator foreman of their bricklayers, because he was a bully to the men, and hurried them on. In the same firm that I am now speaking of, I have seen (and I have done it myself) two 4-inches carried up for an 18-inch wall, and the inside 9-inches filled in with the clearing of the brick-field, and a course of headers run on the top: then it has had grout covered over it, and run down the sides of the wall. Yes, Mr. Editor, there is a firm in London, I can mention, who employ the greatest bully they could find as their foreman of bricklayers; a fellow who could not obtain his living as a journeyman, and who takes the brickwork piece work. On Saturday night he is allowed to pay the men, and what is the consequence? Why he employs one or two good tradesmen, and the remainder consists of any thing he can pick up that is cheap, he charging his employer 5s. per day for all his men, and paying the majority of them 3s. or 4s. per day, while he pockets the remainder. By this system of *building* a respectable workman has but a bare chance of getting employment, much less of having the opportunity of exerting his skill.

I am, Sir, &c.,

Henry Johnstone.

ERRORS IN CATALOGUE OF EXHIBITION AT THE ACADEMY.

Mr. Leeds presents his compliments to the Editor of "The Builder, and begs to say, that among the strange mistakes in the catalogue of the exhibition, No. 1205 has a wrong title affixed to it. Instead of being called "Street Architecture: study for the façade of a small palazzo,"—as which it must seem little less than absurdity,—it should have been, "Capricio: Architectural Innovation;" it being like No. 1204, not a design for any thing in particular, but merely intended to shew some novel ideas, fanciful or fantastical—certainly by no means orthodox ones,—and hints for composition and detail.

*** Our correspondent is not the only exhibitor who has reason to complain of the carelessness shewn in the catalogue.

BUILDERS' ESTIMATES.

Sir,—The following are the prices given in for a new parsonage and out-offices to be erected at Brocklesby, in the county of Lincoln.

Bricks, lime, and sand found by the proprietor; architect, Mr. S. S. Teulon, of London.

Morehead, Hull	£2,640
Pewster, Hull	2,486
Forman and Frow, Hull	1,650
Downs, Hull	1,591
Enderly	1,459

I am, Sir, &c.,

Hull, May 20. A Subscriber.

*** We occasionally receive letters objecting to the publication of builders' tenders; and indeed are not quite certain ourselves that any advantage results from the indiscriminate insertion of such. In a case like the above, however, where the difference is so frightful as to shew conclusively that something *must* be wrong, we consider it our duty to publish it to draw attention to the system, and induce greater care on the part of builders when estimating.

Decoration of Houses of Parliament.—Mr. Pugin, the architect, has had several artists employed in Lynn, making casts of different parts of the architecture of St. Margaret's church, and St. Nicholas's chapel, as examples for the decorative parts of the New Houses of Parliament, the arrangement of which, it seems, has been intrusted to him.

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